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Japan

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

MRL Changes - Flucetosulfuron and Eprinomectin 2008

Approved by:

Steve Wixom
Tokyo

Prepared by:

Suguru Sato

Report Highlights:

On December 17, 2008, Government of Japan announced proposed changes to the MRLs for Flucetosulfuron and Eprinomectin. The comment period will close January 9, 2009. After the domestic comment period closes, GOJ-MHLW will notify those proposed changes to the WTO/SPS committee.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Trade Report
Tokyo [JA1]
[JA]

Summary

The Japanese Ministry of Health Labour and Welfare (MHLW) announced on December 17, 2008, proposed changes to the MRLs for Flucetosulfuron and Eprinomectin. The period for sending comments on these changes ends January 9, 2009. If you have comments it is best to send directly to MHLW as soon as possible. However, MHLW will also notify these proposed changes to the WTO/SPS committee, which will provide another chance for public comments to be submitted on this subject. Then after the closing of a the comment period in the WTO, a final report will be made based on the conclusions of a session of the Pharmaceutical Affairs and Food Sanitation Council slated to be held at a later date; this will constitute the final decision.

The comments can be either Japanese or English.

If you have comments, please send them directly to the Japanese Government at:

Standards and Evaluation Division,
Department of Food Safety,
Pharmaceutical and Food Safety Bureau,
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
1-2-2, Chiyoda-ku, Kasumigaseki, Tokyo, 100-
Tel: 03-5253-1111
Fax: 03-3501-4868

Mr. K. OGI (ogi-katsuhiro@mhlw.go.jp)
Mr. M. TSUKANO (tsukano-masaaki@mhlw.go.jp)
Mr. Y. EJIMA (ejima-yuuichiro@mhlw.go.jp)
Ms. A. NAKATA (nakata-ayumi@mhlw.go.jp)
Mr. D. TAKEUCHI (takeuchi-daisuke@mhlw.go.jp)
Mr. T. NUKUI (nukui-takeshi@mhlw.go.jp)
Mr. F. ANDOU (andou-fumihiko@mhlw.go.jp)
Tel. ex. 4273, 2486, 2488, 4281, 2487, 2489

Establishment of Maximum Residue Limits for Agricultural Chemicals in Food

Purpose and Background

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) is going to develop the compositional specification for food.

Under the provisions of Article 11, Paragraph 1 of the Food Sanitation Law, the Minister of Health, Labour, and Welfare is authorized to establish residue standards (maximum residue limits: MRLs) for pesticides, feed additives, and veterinary drugs (hereafter referred to as just "agricultural chemicals") that may remain in foods. Any food for which standards are established pursuant to the provisions is not permitted to be marketed in Japan unless such food complies with the established standards.

On May 29, 2006, the MHLW introduced the positive list system for agricultural chemicals in food.* Basically, all foods distributed in the Japanese marketplace are subject to regulation based on the system.

This time the MHLW has newly established MRLs (draft) for some food commodities. This activity is targeted to two chemicals: flucetosulfuron (pesticide) and eprinomectin (veterinary drug). Details are given below.

Note: The positive list system was established based on the 2003 amendment of the Food Sanitation Law. The system aims to prohibit the distribution of any food in the Japanese marketplace if it contains agricultural chemicals at amounts exceeding a certain level (0.01 ppm) specified under the Law.

Outline of revision

Flucetosulfuron (herbicide): This chemical is not permitted for use in Japan. This time the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) has decided to approve the chemical based on the Agricultural Chemicals Regulation Law. In response to MAFF's decision, the MHLW has newly established MRLs (draft) for some crops. Currently, MRLs are not set for any crops.

Eprinomectin (antiparasitics): This chemical is not permitted for use in Japan. MAFF has decided to approve some veterinary drug products whose effective ingredient is eprinomectin. In response to MAFF's action, the MHLW has newly established MRLs (draft) for some food commodities.

For draft MRLs, see Attachments 1-1 through 1-2.

The existing MRLs appear in either of the MRLs List (the Item 6, Section A "General Compositional Standards for Food," Part I "Food" of the Specifications and Standards for Food, Food Additives, Etc.) or Provisional MRLs List (Item 7, Section A), according to food commodities. These MRLs have been modified as necessary. Finalized MRLs for these chemicals will be placed on the MRLs List in Item 6, and the MRLs currently placed in Item 7 will be deleted.

Attachment. 1-1

Fulcetosulfuron (Herbicide)

Commodity	MRL (draft) ppm	Current MRL ppm
Rice (brown rice)	0.05	

Note:

The uniform limit (0.01 ppm) will be applied to commodities for which draft MRLs are not given.

Attachment. 1-2

Eprinomectin (antiparasitics)

Commodity	MRL ¹ (draft) ppm	Current ¹ MRL ppm
Cattle, muscle	0.1	0.10
Other terrestrial mammals ² , muscle	0.1	0.1
Cattle, fat	0.25	0.25
Other terrestrial mammals, fat	0.1	0.1
Cattle, liver	2	2.00
Other terrestrial mammals, liver	0.3	2
Cattle, kidney	0.3	0.30
Other terrestrial mammals, kidney	0.3	2
Cattle, edible offal	2	2
Other terrestrial mammals, edible offal	0.3	2
Milk	0.02	0.02

Note:

The uniform limit (0.01 ppm) will be applied to commodities for which draft MRLs are not given. Some limits in the column, "MRL (draft)," remain unchanged from the current MRLs.

1. Calculated as eprinomectin B1a
2. "Other terrestrial mammals" refers to all terrestrial mammals, except cattle and pig.